

# CASA of Cochise County News & Views

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Abby Dodge & Family

Hey everyone! Everything feels so much different than it did at this time last month...

First, I wanted to start by saying that I hope everyone is well. I hope you're staying safe and healthy – if there's anything that you need that I am able to help you with, please let me know! Second, thank you so much for bearing with us during this time of uncertainty and having to change how we normally operate. This is as new to us as it is to you.

By now, you're likely as sick of the term "social distancing" as I am, but apparently this is our new normal, at least for the time being. As a result, we'll be relying more on virtual connections using Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, or other options for us to see each other while remaining apart from each other. I know technology can be intimidating and difficult at times, but we're

## Coordinator's Comments

trying to find the options that are the most user-friendly and easily accessible. Hopefully this won't need to continue for too long.

One thing that I need from you all, especially now, is to remember to check your CASAaz email on a regular basis (once a week, at minimum). This is the easiest way for us to get information to everyone in a rapidly changing environment. I have reached out to each of you who has not been logging in on a regular basis with a friendly reminder to do so. If you need help accessing your email, let us know and we'll try to walk you through it. It's so much better than the one we started with when we first introduced the casaaz.gov email, so give it a chance!

Another thing that I'm sure you've had to deal with by now is the change in approach to meeting with and maintaining relationships with your CASA kiddos. You should be limiting/eliminating your face-to-face interactions with them. If you are still seeing them in-person, you're likely having to adjust what those interactions look like due to the many closures and again, that dreaded social distancing.

National CASA offered some guidance for visitation during this time.

### 1. Practice Visitation at a Distance

- Talk from a distance – the current recommendation remains keeping at least 6 feet between you and another person.

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## Coordinator's Comments (Continued)

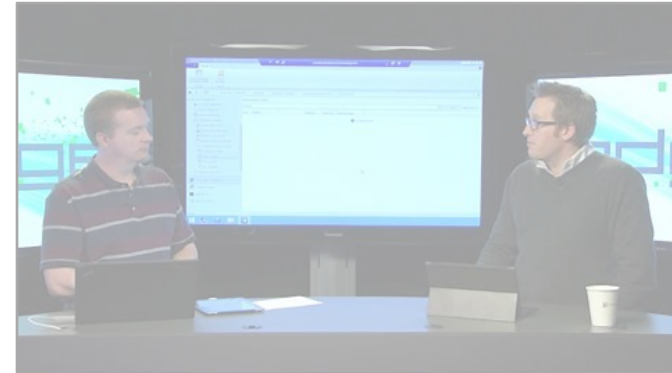
- Talk with the children through a window or door - call the foster parent upon arrival and talk to the child from outside either through the door or while the child looks out the window and the CASA remains on the phone with the child – that way you can at least wave.

### 2. Alternatives to Face-to-Face Visitation

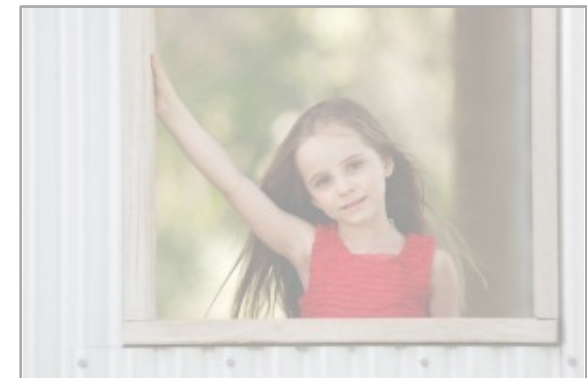
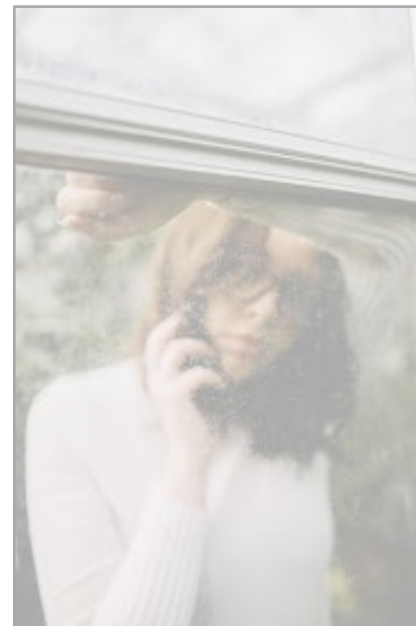
- Texting – obviously not a great idea for younger kids... and keep in mind that unless the youth has his or her own phone, the texts will be read by at least the foster parent, so some of the privacy is lost.
- Video Conferencing – be aware of who is in the room with your CASA child, for confidentiality purposes.
- Phone Calls – Same as above, if you're on speaker phone especially.
- Send a handwritten letter or card – really brighten their day! Chances are the child doesn't get a lot of personal mail, so this is a really good idea.

As always, thank you guys for sticking with us and our program even though things have had to slow down drastically. We'll continue to keep you informed of any changes, and please stay in touch. Don't be afraid to call, text, email – whatever you need to feel connected (aside from coming into the office as we are trying to limit our interactions as well). We'll plan some sort of fun get together once we're allowed to reenter society.

I can't wait!



*Social Distancing*



*visiting through windows*

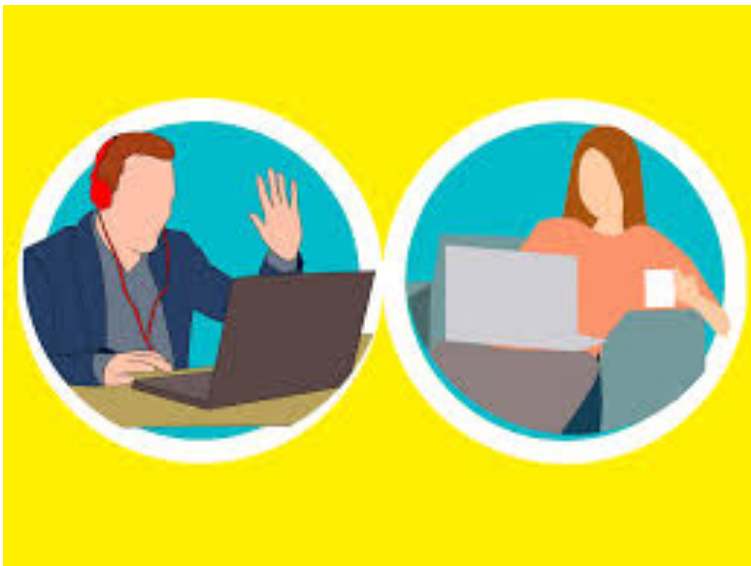
# Calls for Articles for May 2020 CASA News & Views

by Abby Dodge, Cochise County Program Manager

Since we're still getting used to social distancing and what that looks like when working with youth, I'd really love to hear from you guys of how you maintained your relationships throughout this difficult time. Whether it included learning/using new apps or other technology or pre-selected conversation topics to keep conversations moving smoothly over the phone, we'd love to hear about it!

Unfortunately, with the schools being closed statewide for the remainder of the 19-20 schoolyear, it seems unlikely that everything will be back to normal by the time our next newsletter comes out... so please, share with us your experiences – I bet it will help everyone understand that sometimes our best is all we can do, this is our new normal, and we can still remain connected.

Thank you!





# Adjusting to New Norms

by LuRue Troyer, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

A month ago, people were still planning cross-country trips and going about their lives as they always had. A new virus was in the news, to be sure, but it didn't seem particularly relevant. Thirty days later, we all are caught up in changing our very lifestyles.

It is probably easiest for me, living alone with only myself to account for. For a few years now, I have been arguing that it would not be that much of a hardship to give up my car. In a couple of months, I will be writing "88 years old" on forms, an age when many seniors have had to turn in their driver's licenses.

And now, fairly suddenly, we have found ourselves more confined to our homes than we could ever have imagined. OK! Now I would have to put my theory into practice...could I really get along without my car!??

For about a year I have been an enthusiastic advocate of the shopping program at Fry's, formerly known as Clicklist. I perused the items on Fry's website and filled my cart that way, showing up during the selected hour to welcome the person who was bringing my order to the car. The whole process took 15 minutes or less. My husband was the one in the family who liked to read labels and lovingly examine the produce. I however am thrilled to have someone just bring everything to my car!

This past month has provided some challenges. Sometimes only half my order could be filled. So it was time to take it to the next level and get my groceries while car-less...in other words, Delivery!

Most things provide a learning curve and this one did, too, but my last experience was Terrific! I joined Instacart (\$99/year) and have now shopped twice at Safeway. The first time the shopper felt badly that so

many things were not available. But last time I stumbled onto the Secret and got my whole order except for one item. The Secret for many of the stores, I suspect, is that your shopper is out in the aisles in the morning, before everything has been picked clean. This requires that you have arranged your pickup or delivery time to be in the morning.

This last time I used the Instacart app on my phone and was delighted that the shopper kept in contact with me in real time, asking about possible substitutions. There is also an option to Chat, making it possible to have last minute questions and comments.

I set up empty totes by my front door and about 20 minutes after my last contact with the shopper, my groceries magically appeared in the totes!



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## Adjusting to New Norms (Continued)

I am a long-time Amazon shopper, but many of their virtual shelves are just as empty as any supermarket. So I have been discovering other vendors. One of my new “Self-hibernation” projects was going to be bread-making. I found a small, used machine on Amazon and had it a couple of days later.

Imagine my surprise, then, when I couldn't find flour or yeast.....anywhere!! Including Amazon! That led me on a Treasure Hunt, which resulted in my finding some new places. And as long as I was making orders for flour and yeast, I might as well fill in with some toiletry items, etc. that I might be needing in the next few months. And so on!!

The end result has been orders into five different places, with 14 different delivery dates. But they will all be delivered to my front door or mailbox. Still won't need a car!

One order (flour and some other organic products) will be dropped off in Whetstone and I **will** have to drive to get that one. Not everything is perfect!

As a project person, staying at home is never a hardship. I have booklets to make, sewing projects to complete, albums to put together. I stay in touch with family and friends through emails, texts, phone, etc.

Being an introvert makes this self-imposed isolation a time of blissful, uninterrupted time to enjoy “just doing things”.



Items on order, according to Market and Delivery Date



# Adjusting to New Norms - Another Perspective

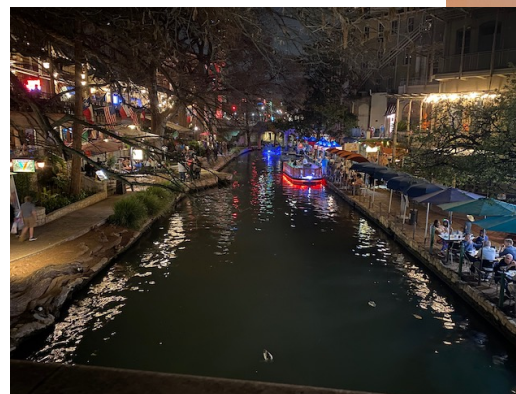
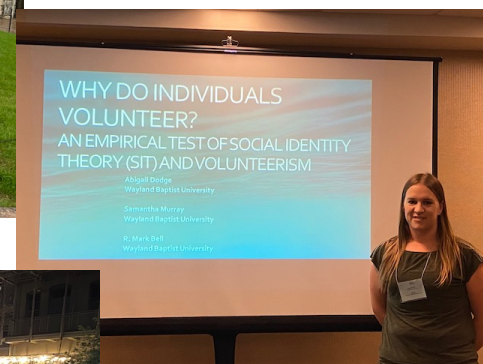
by Abby Dodge, Cochise County CASA Program Manager

A month ago, everything was normal. I had plans to travel to San Antonio, Texas, for the Southwest Academy of Management 2020 conference to present on my research, titled "Why do Individuals Volunteer? An Empirical Test of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Volunteerism." I was supposed to get back just in time for Spring Break; even though we didn't have any real plans, my son was looking forward to the week off of school. Little did I know back then, while stressing out about this presentation, that everything was going to change so drastically.

The first week of March was a crazy one. Caitlin started t-ball practice on Mondays and Wednesdays. Ethan started coach pitch baseball practice on Tuesdays and Fridays. Caitlin continued gymnastics lessons on Tuesdays. Because I'm trying to be healthier for my kids' sake, I was getting up at 0430 every morning to be at the gym by 0500. Which meant by the time we had everyone fed after practice and had homework done and kids ready for bed, I was basically ready for bed myself. Work was also really busy; we received several applications in late February/early March, and the process of getting applicants trained and certified is extensive. Some days I felt like I was rushing from one meeting to the next. But, in case somehow you haven't figured this out about me yet, I enjoy being busy.

Fast forward to the second week of March. The Coronavirus is in the news, it's starting to ramp up here in the United States, but aside from not being able to buy toilet paper, everything seems to be moving along as normal. I started getting a little nervous with my trip looming,

but my husband assured me that he didn't think I was being irresponsible by still going to the conference. So, I went, and it was a glorious few days of no children, relaxing at the Hyatt Riverwalk in San Antonio. Unfortunately, a lot of universities had put out travel restrictions after I had already traveled, resulting in very poor attendance at the conference. Better for me, made the presentation a lot easier. I was able to connect with my research chair from school and eat delicious meals on the Riverwalk. I was excited to get home though, and for me, that's when everything started to change.



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## Adjusting to New Norms - Another Perspective (Continued)

School was cancelled for the week after spring break. Okay, no problem. We'll figure it out. Little League suspended the season. Again, no problem, now we have our evenings free again. No more gymnastics practice; Caitlin is disappointed, but we'll move on. Then all of a sudden everything changed at work too – I had to postpone in-person interviews, cancel training with new volunteers, and try to keep everyone updated on all of the changes. Meetings were being canceled... just like that my work calendar was eerily empty. Then, the gyms closed... I think that one hit me the hardest, it had become a big part of my daily routine. And now school is going to occur at home for the remainder of the schoolyear. This is definitely a challenge with trying to balance a full-time job and ensuring that the right amount of learning is getting done at the same time... I'm still not sure what that will look like, but somehow it will all get done.

Although I'm thankful for being forced to slow down and getting this opportunity to spend more time with my children, I'm looking forward to going back to normal, whatever that will look like. I'm not great at staying in and not being around people, but I'm adjusting. It's sad how much I look forward to my weekly trip to the grocery store! My dog is going to be in the best shape of his life after this, due to his morning (and usually evening) walks that I was never able to fit into my schedule before. I think that's one thing that I'll keep once we're allowed to reenter society.

For those of you who are used to staying busy, I see you. As an extrovert, this has been challenging. But, I believe we'll come out of

this with a newfound appreciation for the little things – at least I know I will! I'm planning a CASA barbecue once this is over – I can almost taste it already. 🤗 🤗 Hang in there!





# The Book Club

by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

I realized over a week ago that I needed to come up with some alternate activities to do with my girl in Tucson. She struggles in reading, but she loves fantasies. The Best for Babies group had a presentation of parents and their children reading the same book together over the phone.

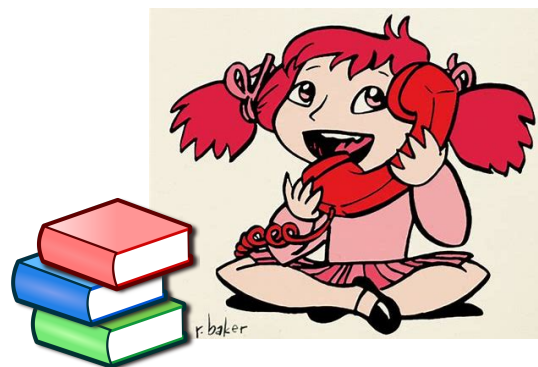
This was my inspiration. I decided my girl and I would read the same book and discuss it over the phone. We would have something to talk about, and I would have a chance to assess her reading skills. I have suspected for some time now that she may not get the gist of the story and may use her imagination to fill in what she doesn't quite "get." I am going to use my teaching skills to see how well she comprehends what she reads.

This activity won't fly without some bells and whistles to liven it up. I thought and thought and remembered an 8th grade class where a group of the girls all decided to read "Clan of the Cave Bear." They invited me to join them. We discussed the book about once a week at lunch, and all the participants gathered to share our admiration of the heroine and to vicariously participate in all her trials and tribulations.

That was a start but not enough. So I remembered a book club I had joined about twenty years ago. Ah ha! We were going to form a book club. Enough for an action plan!

## *Selling the idea to my girl:*

1. I told her about my 8th grade girls reading the same book.
2. I combined this with the book club concept.
3. I asked her to think of a name for the book club. She came up with "The Struggle Is Real." This was the logo on the shirt she was wearing.
4. We will meet over the phone every Wednesday between 7 and 8. We will read a chapter a week and discuss it.
5. She really, really liked the idea.
6. We bought two books at Target. She had gotten the first of a series as a Christmas gift from her DCS case manager. She asked for the second book, "P.S. I Still Love You." .
7. I took her picture for the newsletter. She posed until I got just the right picture. I read the first chapter last night.
8. Tonight is Wednesday. Will she call? Will it go well?



## Continuation of The Book Club

by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

My girl in Tucson called me. I was excited because I thought we would get to discuss our book club. Unfortunately, and very common when our foster parents are soooooo busy, the book had been stored in inventory, and Deb forgot to ask for it, so she had not read any of it. I quickly regrouped and told her about my problems connecting my cell phone to Blue Tooth. My girl is very interested in cell phones and technology, so she immediately began advising me. She told me she would install it on our next visit. I reminded her that we will be able to visit in person when the virus subsides.

We then shared all the little things that had been going on with us. She still likes her roommate but finds the four-year-old boy to be a pain. This led us to chat with how to coexist with a younger foster brother.

We talked for a while and we then did our ritual. At the end of every contact she tells me that I will be with her until the case is dismissed and after that we will still be connected and be friends forever.

I got a good report about her from the foster mother, and I asked the foster mother to please let her have the book. She agreed and apologized. I told her I know how busy she is, and it is okay.

At our next phone call, my girl had the book. We had agreed we would read the first chapter.

She had read the whole book. We discussed the first chapter and will continue our plan of a chapter per phone call. She knew all the

characters and what they were doing. She didn't quite understand why they were doing it. She is in 8th grade and just learned to read last year. She is a concrete thinker and has not learned to think abstractly. I am not quite sure how to teach her to think abstractly, but I will ask her what she would do if she were that character.

We had a great visit.





# What I Did on My Spring Break

by Karen Fasimpaur, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

Over spring break this month, I gave one of my kiddos a choice of going on an outing to the Chiricahua National Monument or to Kartchner Caverns. He chose the Chiricahuas, which is not too far away (90 minutes from Douglas, 1 hour 45 minutes from Sierra Vista). This is an incredible place and one that most kids I know (and even many adults) have not visited. Also, this park is now free to visit.

Before we set off, we stopped by the library to drop off and pick up books. This kiddo is a voracious reader, and I'm glad to have gotten him some books before the library closed during the coronavirus situation. (Since then, I've ordered him some additional books from the online seller [ABE](#), which has quite inexpensive used books. I have them shipped direct and enjoy the thought of packages arriving at his placement just for him.)

Before our hike, we stopped at the visitor center to learn about the park and what we might see. This kid started

making a list of animals he hoped to see. Luckily for us, we saw a whole family of coatimundi just a little way down the road. We stopped, got out, and took pictures and then proceeded up the mountain for a hike.

I had brought a camera and binoculars for this excursion. I have an

old digital camera that I often let kids borrow. I'm always surprised how much they enjoy that. Somehow it seems different and more special to them than their phones or tablets. I had one little autistic girl who could spend hours taking pictures of every little detail of objects even in the most boring places. It's a good creative activity that can occupy a lot of time. Often, I'll either email or print the pictures for them later.

We had a good hike, and my kid ended up getting



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## What I Did on My Spring Break (Continued)

a special pin for having hiked five miles. (He was very persistent about wanting to go back to the visitor center to get his pin.)

On the way home, this kid filled out a survey the park service had given us about the experience we had. It was a good way for him to reflect on the value of our public lands. He also wrote a postcard to his dad.

My kiddo really enjoyed the day (and I did too!). One of his comments was "Now I can say I actually did something over spring break."

This made me think about what I've heard about the need for normalizing behavior for kids in foster care, especially for tweens and teens. There are so many things that make them feel "different" in a bad way. Helping them participate in activities that are just like what other kids do can be a real help for them.



*This creative photo was taken **through** the binoculars. I never would have thought of that. - Karen F.*



## Articles by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

### An Unexpected Adoption

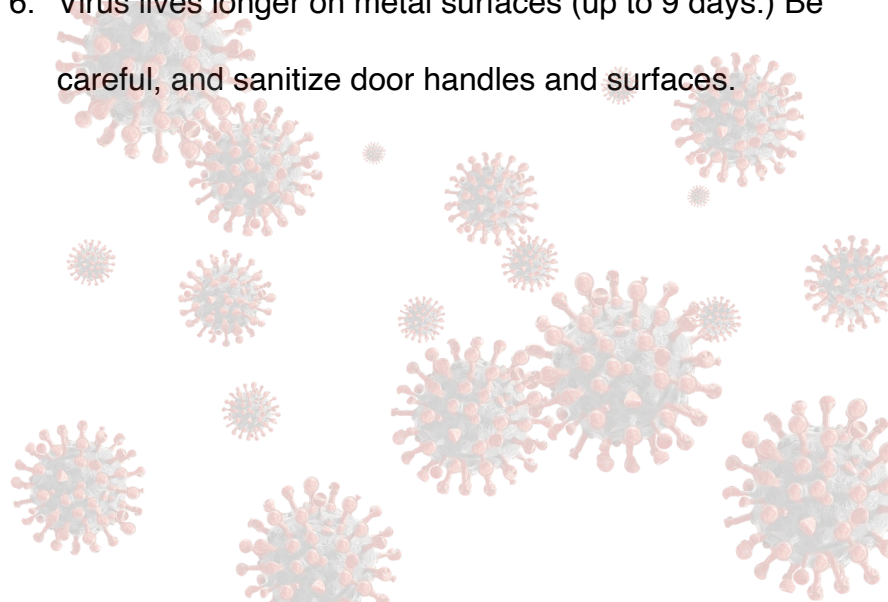
On the 6th of March, the foster mother of my baby went to court to present her adoption petition. We both thought she was going to get the adoption date at that time. Later that day, I got several messages from her that I didn't understand. She referred to herself as the "real mother". I didn't know why she was saying this, but I didn't get a chance to call her back till the next day.

When I reached her, she told me the adoption had taken place. I didn't know how that happened and asked her to explain. She told me she had gone to court with the baby and was told this hearing was the adoption. She didn't realize this. She didn't invite anyone to come with her. I have only had 4 babies, and none of my other cases have been this way. Ready or not, my foster mother signed the adoption papers, and her foster child was her daughter. I cheered over the phone. There will be an adoption party at a future date. I will present the adoption blanket, and loving relatives will gather to celebrate this welcome addition to their clan.

I would have loved for this baby to have a more traditional adoption, but this hearing was the adoption, and a forever family was created.

### Tips to Help Your Body Resist the Virus

1. Gargle with warm saltwater morning and night.
2. Drink warm liquids.
3. Hydrate with water especially lemon water.
4. Wash clothes and hair when coming in from outside activities.
5. Wash hands as often as possible.
6. Virus lives longer on metal surfaces (up to 9 days.) Be careful, and sanitize door handles and surfaces.



## Positive Connections

by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

I walk in my neighborhood. Practicing social distancing (moving out into the street), I exchange pleasantries with my neighbors. One neighbor down the street has two black cars that have been decorated with wild designs (in maroon and silver) plus gadgets that are definitely bells and whistles. I stopped and told him how much I have always admired his cars. Another neighbor has a truck that has been painted all black (flat black, not glossy black). I told him it was a cool truck. I say hi to everyone and wave at cars. Everyone responds. These are tough times and anything uplifting (even slightly uplifting) can help make it a brighter day.

I walked by one house where the people who live there must help others. When I walked by today there were 5 chalk messages on their driveway thanking them. Two of the messages also asked God to bless them. One message was a bunch of balloons. Seeing that made me say a prayer of thanks for all the people who are stepping up and helping others.

I keep in contact with everyone in my family, my friends, my CASA kids, and the team who takes care of my CASA kids by text, email, and an occasional phone call. God bless my CASA kid and the Dragoos who taught me to text. I call on my landline to friends and family. The days are much longer now that I am mostly in the house and have to operate by phone, text, and email. I focus ahead to when our world is normal again, but I live today with a routine to fill up the day and I am grateful for all the blessings that I have. I thank God for all the good things in my life and I pray. My prayers mention anyone who might be having problems, and I ask for help for all of

us both in our city, our county, our state, the whole country, and the whole world.

SOCKS UP EVERYONE!



**Verenice Quiroz**

*MEO, 3/2/20*

The Court thanked the CASA.

**Emily Duchon**

*TDM Report, 3/10/20*

Emily, her CASA, is a support to J.



## Book Review

by Abby Dodge, Cochise County CASA Coordinator

Here's a short review on a book that I read from the National CASA Book List. I'm hoping to read one from the list each month. 😊

### **Tweak: Growing up on Methamphetamines**

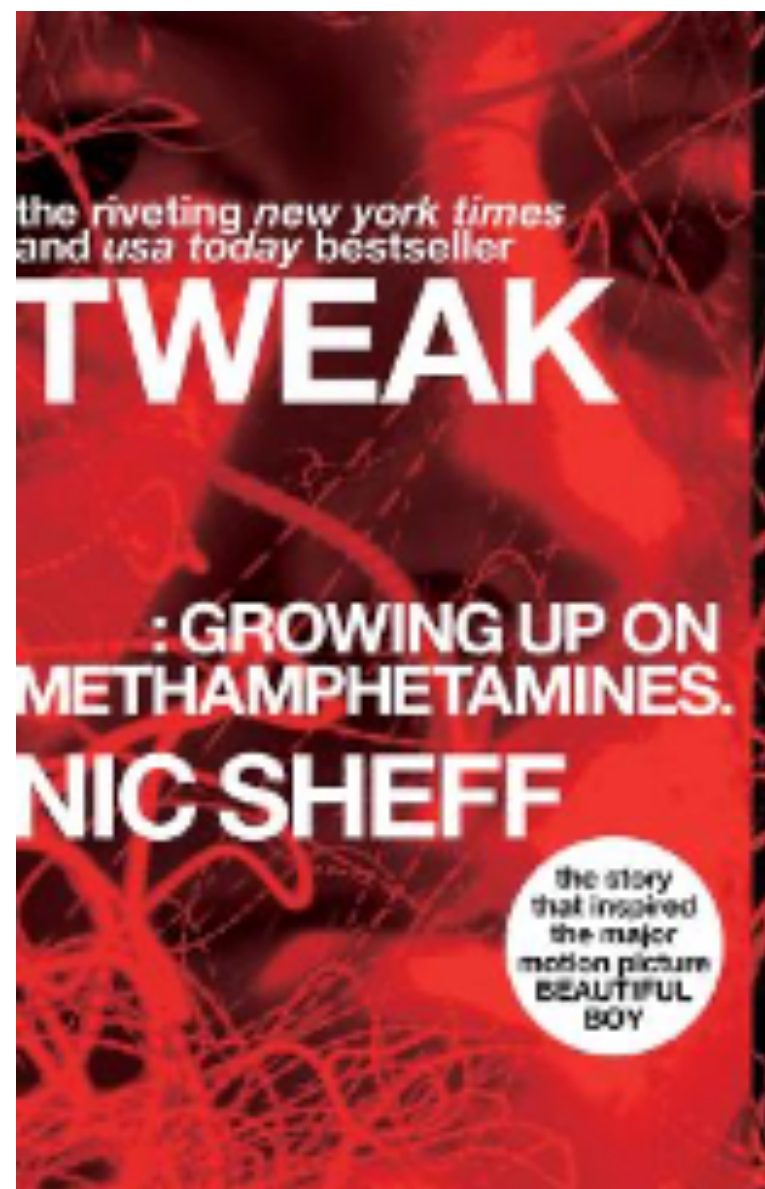
by Nic Sheff

322 pages – (3 hours of training credit)

*Available at any library in Cochise County – the district has three copies, none of which are shelved in Sierra Vista – so I had to request the book through interlibrary loan, which was fast and painless.*

As you probably remember, last month I read Nic's father's account of Nic's substance abuse and the impact it had on their family. This month I was excited to read Nic's first-hand perspective. This was a much more difficult read due to the honesty and portrayal of the different events that are not easy to think about. However, I felt like it gave me a better perspective of what someone struggling with a meth addiction goes through.

One thing that stood out to me was Nic's perspective of how his addiction started - "When he offered me that first line of meth, I didn't hesitate. Growing up I'd heard, you know, never to do heroin. Like, the warnings were everywhere and I was scared – do heroin, get hooked. No one ever mentioned crystal to me. I'd done a little coke,



~Continued on next page~

## Book Review (Continued)

Ecstasy, whatever – I could take it or leave it. But early that morning, when I took those off-white crushed shards up that blue, cut plastic straw – well, my whole world pretty much changed after that.” This was a great reminder of the importance of talking with our youth about the dangers of all drugs, not just focusing on one of the more hardcore ones out there. In this case, Nic still tried other drugs as well, but was still able to excuse, at least partially to himself, his meth use on the lack of warnings in his childhood.

Nic admits that his childhood wasn't awful. However, he feels as though he grew up very quickly due to going with his dad everywhere, including parties and concerts where people were drinking and getting high. He also recounts an experience of climbing into bed with his dad one morning and finding a naked woman in bed. He was worried his dad would end up with AIDS, so his dad taught him about condoms and protection using a carrot. Nic then told about that to his first-grade class during show-and-tell. Children are little sponges, so it was interesting to read a little about the situations Nic had experienced as a child and the impacts that had on him into adulthood.

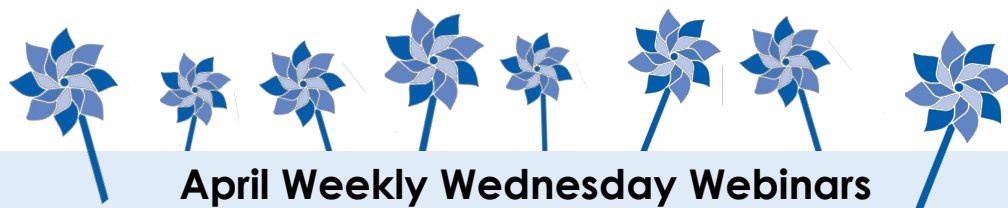
Another perspective that I was glad to read about was his perspective on why he was unable to quit. He says, “The truth was, I didn't want to stop. It's not like I enjoyed stealing or hurting my dad, or whatever. I mean, I hated it. But I was so scared of coming off the drugs. It was like this horrible vicious cycle. The more I used, the more I did things I was ashamed of, and the more I had to use so I never had to face that.” I think it's important to recognize this perspective – that

becoming sober means having to face what you've done to others and yourself in the meantime. That sounds terrifying.

Overall, there's a lot of language and content that some might find uncomfortable to read – but it's definitely helpful for gaining perspective on what it's like to struggle with addiction.







## April Weekly Wednesday Webinars

In honor of April Child Abuse Prevention Month, Prevent Child Abuse Arizona will hold free webinars at 10:00am on every Wednesday in April.



### Clickable Links for the Webinars:

April 1 - 10-11am

Wielding Your Inner Strengths: Building Your Personal Resilience

<https://events.pcaaz.org/events/04-01-20/>

April 8 - 10-11am

Connection Before Correction--Why Attachment Matters

<https://events.pcaaz.org/events/04-08-20/>

April 15 - 10-11am

Preventing and Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences

<https://events.pcaaz.org/events/04-15-20/>

April 22 - 10-11am

The Unique Needs of Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care

<https://events.pcaaz.org/events/04-22-20/>

April 29 - 10-11am

Stress, Trauma, and the Trauma-Informed Approach

<https://events.pcaaz.org/events/04-29-20/>

#### Wielding Your Inner Strengths: Building Your Personal Resilience

April 1 | 10—11am

*Presented by Claire Louge, M.Ed.*

Life is full of challenges - big and small. Whether we're facing major loss, a global pandemic, or just some atrociously bad traffic, life is constantly offering us opportunities to practice resilience. This training will focus on what it means to be resilient, and the qualities and practices that predict a person's ability to thrive despite, or perhaps because of, challenges.

[Register for this Webinar](#)

#### Connection Before Correction—Why Attachment Matters

April 8 | 10—11am

*Presented by Meghan Hays Davis, MAS, IMH-E®*

Parenting is hard, parenting children with trauma histories is a whole different ballgame. This workshop will show how care providers can assess past attachment patterns that lead to negative behaviors, reinterpret those behaviors and provide relationship based guidance and parenting. Relationship based interventions to address trauma and behavioral needs will give participants tools to try at home.

[Register for this Webinar](#)

#### Preventing and Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences

April 15 | 10—11am

*Presented by Claire Louge, M.Ed.*

Childhood trauma affects later adult health and wellbeing. This training will delve into the revolutionary Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study, an ongoing body of research study that demonstrates the link between early trauma and adult behavior. You'll learn how to help those who have experienced childhood trauma build resilience through protective factors and positive childhood experiences.

[Register for this Webinar](#)

#### The Unique Needs of Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care

April 22 | 10—11am

*Presented by Meghan Hays Davis, MAS, IMH-E®*

Science and research tell us that young children have unique needs when faced with trauma and attachment disruptions caused by removal. Participants will gain knowledge about brain development; stress and trauma; attachment; how relationships can heal; and resources available to help.

[Register for this Webinar](#)

#### Stress, Trauma, and the Trauma-Informed Approach

April 29 | 10—11am

*Presented by Claire Louge, M.Ed.*

How does stress negatively impact your life? This workshop will delve into the body's natural response to stress, and use this as a lens for understanding the impact of trauma on human thinking and behavior. Participants will learn simple stress-reduction techniques they can use anywhere, and learn how to apply the trauma-informed approach to their work with people.

[Register for this Webinar](#)



# CASA of the Month

## Risa Dickson-Crawford

It is my pleasure to announce that the CASA of the Month for March 2020 is Risa Dickson-Crawford!

Risa accepted her first case in August 2017 and will unfortunately be leaving us as soon as the Department of Defense lifts its travel ban. However, although she will be leaving the area, she intends to continue on her cases remotely until they are completed. I'm thrilled that she's willing to do whatever it takes to stay on these cases during her upcoming move!

One of Risa's cases is nearing the end with an upcoming adoption. This child moved out of state several months ago with her foster family, making this one a seemingly easy choice for Risa. Her other case, involving an infant, is inching closer and closer to a successful reunification – with the father! I honestly believe that the outcome of this case would have been vastly different had Risa not been so involved.

There are several things that stood out to me about Risa over the past several months, making her an obvious choice for CASA of the Month. First, her ability to see potential in people and give them a chance. She was essential in helping the father on her case develop a solid relationship with his child to move toward reunification. She spent several weekends in a row driving the child to and from Tucson for unsupervised visitation with the father, after strongly advocating for these increased visits to occur. She was also extremely supportive during a placement change, helping by transporting the child from one home to the other and staying with the child until everyone was comfortable.

The second thing goes back Risa's willingness to complete her cases even though the Army is moving her family out of the area. She was originally supposed to leave in March, yet she has a hearing scheduled in early April. Before getting word that they needed to remain in place, she'd already purchased a plane ticket and made plans to attend the upcoming hearing in person. Now that's dedication!

Finally, and possibly what impressed me the most, is Risa's desire to understand the options that are available. When Risa is trying to figure out what to recommend, she takes the initiative to see things for herself rather than relying solely on what one team member is reporting or suggesting. For example, you might remember the article that Risa submitted to our newsletter in February 2020. When she got wind of the treatment program a parent was involved in, she went up to Tucson, took a tour, and discussed the options/services available with the staff on site. She then reported back to her team and encouraged others to go see it for themselves as well. I know this is something that I could improve on as well, so I plan to take a lesson from Risa and do what I can to see the whole picture.

Risa, we're very glad you decided to join our team – and as much as I wish you could stay with us forever, I hope you'll continue with CASA in your new location once you're settled in. We will miss you!



## March 2020



# APRIL 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1 Jan D.</b> 	<b>2 Peanut Butter &amp; Jelly Day</b> 	<b>3</b>	<b>4 School Librarian Day</b> 
<b>5</b>	<b>6 Lois:</b> Court report due for J case.	<b>7</b>	<b>8 Melissa W.</b> 	<b>9</b>	<b>10 National Siblings Days</b> 	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>13 Manuela:</b> Court report due for R case.	<b>14</b>	<b>15 Rubber Eraser Day</b> 	<b>16</b>	<b>17 Pet Owners Independence Day</b> 	<b>18</b>
<b>19 National Garlic Day</b> 	<b>20</b>	<b>21 Juanita:</b> Court report due for GM.	<b>22</b>	<b>23 Take a Chance Day</b> 	<b>24</b>	<b>25 World Penguin Day</b> 
<b>26 National Pretzel Day</b> 	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29 Kathi D. &amp; Karen R.</b> 	<b>30 National Honesty Day</b> 		

# Support Groups

## Morning



**Second Thursday of the Month**

**10:00am - 12 Noon**

*Going Virtual*  
Verlust Kaffee  
414 S Second St, Suite C  
Sierra Vista, AZ  
*Check Email for  
more info*

## Lunchtime



**Fourth Friday of the Month**

**12:00 Noon - 1:00pm**

*Going Virtual*  
Fresh  
6290 Hwy 90  
(near Hobby Lobby)  
Sierra Vista, AZ  
*Check Email for  
more info*

## Evening



**Last Tuesday of the Month**

**6:30 - 8:30pm**

*Temporarily  
Suspended*  
Home of LuRue Feller  
2300 S Drive  
Sierra Vista, AZ



## CASA OF COCHISE COUNTY NEWS &amp; VIEWS

## Financial Support



- Does your child have unmet needs?
- Is there anything that financial restrictions are preventing your child from doing that would help your child achieve normalcy ?
- Are you wanting to take your child for a special activity - maybe for a birthday - but you're worried about the cost?
- Are you having to drive significant distances each month to see your child?



CCCC, Inc.

### Cochise County Council for CASA, Inc.

Is a nonprofit organization that raises funds to the unmet needs of abused neglected and abandoned children in the CASA of Cochise County Program. The primary focus is to ensure that educational progress of CASA children through tutoring and scholarships. In addition the council provides clothing, toys and personal items.

**If your CASA child/youth has an unmet need, consider the Cochise County Council for CASA to help!!**

Call your CASA Coordinator at 432-7521 OR

Send an email to [ADodge@courts.az.gov](mailto:ADodge@courts.az.gov)

\*\*\*If your child wishes to participate in monthly lessons (gymnastics, martial arts, swimming, etc.), consider applying for a grant from the Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation. Visit their website for more info: [www.affcf.org](http://www.affcf.org)



# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter

By Elizabeth R. Thornton

### ***Intuitive knowledge to help you create powerful new mental models***

How objective are you? How often are you over-reacting to situations, taking things personally, perceiving tone in e-mail or judging people unfairly? We all do this at some time or another.

The challenge for many of us is that when we are under a lot of pressure, we tend to be less objective. Under stress, most of us draw solely on our past experiences, old assumptions and biases, which cloud our ability to see things clearly and make sound judgments. Moreover, our desire to succeed is often so strong, that, under these intense circumstances, our insecurities and our limiting and unproductive mental models tend to get in our way, creating even more stress and causing us to react in ways that we may regret.

Our ability to be objective depends on our willingness to question our mental models, the lens through which we perceive, interpret and respond to our world. If our mental models are incorrect, then our understanding of what is going on and our response to it, are often incorrect. This is why we sometimes misjudge situations, over-react and take things personally.

The good news is that with the brain's neuroplasticity and with practice, we can interrupt our automatic reactions, those often driven by limiting and unproductive mental models, and choose a different response. Each time we do this, we are re-wiring our neural network by creating new pathways based on new models: new ways of perceiving and responding to our world. We can actually learn to think smarter!

One of the most powerful mental model transformation catalysts is knowledge, new information or logic that defies old mental models and ways of thinking. As we have seen, mental models are deep-rooted beliefs, ideas, and notions that we tend to hold onto, no matter what. They define our sense of reality and drive our perception, interpretation, and response to everything we experience. Mental models predispose us to very specific ways of thinking and acting. They've usually been with us a while, so we tend to trust them, in some cases justifiably. For most of us, we have never been taught about mental models and how to evaluate them to determine if they are helpful or harmful.

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# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter (Continued)

To transform unproductive mental models, **you** must change **your** mind! I cannot tell you that your Perfectionist mental model does not serve you well. You have to decide, through your own logic and reason, whether your way of seeing the world is no longer valid for you. This requires that you be open to new knowledge, information, and reasoning. It is in the wake of this new knowledge that transformation takes place. Mark Jung-Beeman of Northwestern University's Institute for Neuroscience and others call it a "moment of insight" and have used MRI and EEG technologies to study how they happen. The findings suggest that at a moment of insight, an adrenaline-like chemical is released, and a complex set of new connections is created in the brain. It's these new connections that have the potential to enhance our mental resources to help us transform limiting mental models.

To help facilitate a moment of insight, there are four Principles of Objectivity that have been very effective in transforming old mental models. These are insights that we all intuitively understand and that can be verified through our own personal experience, and yet we tend to take them for granted or discount altogether.

### Principle of Objectivity #1 – There Will Always Be Situations That We Don't Like

We all know that what can go wrong, will go wrong. But often when things happen that we don't expect or anticipate, we start the mini-movie titled, "Why me, this always happens to me." We start playing back memories of all the things that have gone wrong lately. Some of us react by disowning the problem or, worse yet, engaging in wishful thinking, willing the problem to go away on its own. Of course, in most cases, it won't.

In order to effectively handle day-to-day problems, the first step is to accept that they exist. Acceptance of "what is" is a precondition to right action. Non-acceptance is an ideal condition for an emotional, subjective reaction, and we have already learned how that can end. Furthermore, non-acceptance does not alter the fact that there is a problem. It just creates a chain of further emotional reactions that make the problem worse. If you are objective in your perception of a situation, you can then respond to it appropriately. The key is to accept a problem as it occurs and not take it personally.



# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter (Continued)

### **Principle #2: People are Fundamentally the Same but Are Also Unique**

There is always a spirited debate about this principle, so it is important to understand the context. The Human Genome Project has confirmed that we are all fundamentally the same! Of the three billion DNA base pairs, only 0.1 percent distinguishes each of us from anyone else on the planet. In addition to our genetic similarity, we are all fundamentally the same in terms of our basic needs and desires. Some may say these universal desires are also a part of our DNA.

In the context of objectivity, this means that we must assume that everyone has formed mental models through which they frame their world based on their unique experiences. We can assume that just like you, everyone has a unique frame of reference; just like you, everyone else is thinking and acting through mental models they are probably not aware of. For example, many people have the common mental model that they are not good enough and are trying to minimize that feeling by aspiring to be perfect. Many of us are looking for someone to validate us, tell us that we are okay. Many people are worried about their health or their children or their careers. When you really think about it, in these ways we are all fundamentally the same.

A difficult challenge for many of us is the desire to control other people. Many of us get frustrated when someone doesn't act the way we want them to. We want them to be like us and see the world the way we do and respond to us in the same way that we would respond to them. We often get angry when we are unable to change people. But the true source of this anger is often our lack of acceptance that people are fundamentally the same, even though unique. That is, other people behave as they do because of their unique frames of reference, based on their backgrounds and experiences hardwired in their neural nets—just like you respond the way you do because of your mental models that are based on your background and experiences.

Being objective means understanding and accepting that people are fundamentally the same but unique in their background experiences and therefore their perspectives. Being objective means allowing people to be who they are. If you expect people to conform to your desires, then it is your own unfulfilled expectation that causes you anger. Instead of trying to change the other person and getting angry at them when they don't change, objectivity demands that you understand and accept another person's point of view or frame of

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# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter (Continued)

reference. By accepting this principle and allowing people to be who they are, you will create more collaborative relationships at work and happier, more sustainable relationships at home. This is not to say that if someone you care about is in trouble you don't try your best to help them. Being objective is understanding that people can only change themselves, but you can try to be a catalyst. Helping someone or being a catalyst for change requires great objectivity. It is not about imposing your point of view. It starts with accepting the other person, not judging them for who they are or for what might be happening.

### **Principle #3: We Cannot Always Control the Results of Our Actions**

Have you ever worked on a project and done your absolute best, but the project still failed? Almost everyone has. Many of us believe that there are only two possible results to every effort, success or failure. What dictates the results, and the varying degrees of success or failure? The reality is that we cannot control hidden variables, the things that are unknown and the things that are unknowable. To be successful means doing what needs to be done in the present moment and being objective to the results. The challenge for many of us to being objective to the results is that we have been socialized to

value ourselves and others based on performance and achievement. This need to control the end result often creates anxiety which then undermines our ability to see and do what needs to be done in the present moment. It is a difficult and unproductive cycle in which many of us get trapped.

Being an Objective Leader means understanding and accepting the fact that we have limited control over hidden variables. Objective Leaders know that we have absolute control over our choice of action and performing the action itself. But instead of thinking about the task at hand, our minds tend to project into the future with thoughts such as, "If I fail, I won't get the promotion which means I won't be able to buy the new house for my family or send my children to college...." Our minds can create mini movies of doom and gloom, which derail any hope of productivity in that moment. Have you noticed that all your anxiety about the way things will turn out never changes the result anyway? To achieve greater results requires staying focused in the present moment and putting all of your attention on the action you choose, and then performing that action the best you can. Then regardless of the result, consider it a data point, new information to help you choose your next best action toward your desire goal.

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# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter (Continued)

### Principle #4: Everything is Connected and Interrelated

This line of reasoning helped me transform my old model into a new mental model that I am indeed good enough. This principle enabled me to finally get off the couch and back on my feet! Here is my new way of thinking that changed everything:

As human beings, it is clear that we did not choose the world we find ourselves in, nor do we have control over much of it. The earth revolves, the sun generates energy, changes in ocean temperature in one part of the world affect weather patterns in other parts of the world, and so on. It all works together, everything having a purpose and connected to everything else. It is also apparent that living beings are interconnected and interrelated and each is born with its own set-up; its inherent capacity to grow, develop, and reach its fullest potential. For example, each caterpillar has within itself the inherent capacity and everything it needs to morph into a beautiful butterfly.

When I dug a little deeper into our natural world to try to validate for myself the notion that everything has a purpose and is in fact connected and interrelated with everything else, I thought about one of my science lessons in grade school—photosynthesis. Very simply, photosynthesis is a process used by plants and other organisms to

convert light energy, normally from the Sun, into chemical energy that supplies all of the organic compounds and most of the energy necessary for life on Earth. Wow, not only do most plants, algae, and certain types of bacteria perform photosynthesis to support their own survival, their inherent capacity and purpose is also key to everyone and everything else's survival.

Although this is just one example, this was the clincher for me. The key for me was to realize that this same interconnectedness and inherent capacity applied to me—and to all other people. So, I put it all together in my mind. Just like everything else in our natural world, each of us is born with unique gifts, interests and abilities and the potential to fully express them that has a purpose and function that is connected to everything else. This was an “aha” moment for me. Think about it. You did not choose your gender, your race, your parents or their socioeconomic status, your siblings, or where you were born. You also didn't choose what you love or what you are good at. At some point you realized that you loved chocolate, hated lima beans, were good at sports and public speaking. But you didn't choose any of it. Rather, I now believe that all of this is your unique set-up, what you came here with in order to fulfill a purpose that is

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# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter (Continued)

connected to everything and everyone else. I thought to myself, how could I not be good enough if, with my unique combination of gifts and skills, I have a purpose and a function that is connected to everyone and everything else? This definitely got me off the couch. I was beginning to see myself differently.

Another moment of insight came when I began to realize that even our circumstances, successes and failures, pains and losses is also a part of our unique set-up that shapes us and helps us grow into our fullest potential. In my objectivity classes, many people have shared stories of difficult childhood experiences that they look back on with anger and disappointment. It is important to understand that just as we didn't choose our race, gender, eye color, or hair color, in most cases we didn't choose, nor could we control our circumstances. No one chooses to have a mentally ill parent. No one chooses to have a sister with Down syndrome. No one chooses to witness a horrible accident that causes a friend's death. These unique circumstances and experiences are also a part of your unique set up that also shape who you are that is connected to your purpose which is connected to everything else. As such, it is important not to just think about the negative consequences of these circumstances and the limiting mental models that you may have developed as a result. It is critical to

also think about the skills and unique perspective you may have gained from those experiences that can serve you in fulfilling your purpose. For example, Sharon, a brilliant and kind woman in her early 30s whose mother was mentally ill, had to learn self-sufficiency and independence at an early age, which served her well in her entrepreneurial venture. Ralph, a very successful engineer in his early 40s whose family was dysfunctional, was forced to assume great responsibility at a young age and became very resourceful, trustworthy, and dependable. Regardless of the circumstances that you had to manage, accepting them as a part of you—and as something to leverage as part of your unique experience, gifts, and potential—is the key to objectivity.

It became clear to me that our power comes from fully leveraging all that we are. We must learn to value and accept ourselves based on our unique combination of core strengths, gifts, circumstances and experiences. Everything we are is unique to us, from our DNA to where we were born, to whom we were born, to what we experience and uniquely shape who we are.

For me Principle #4 changed everything. Now, the only thing I have to do every morning is get up and be the best I can be in every moment,

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# From the Manual

## The Principles of Objectivity Can Help You Think Smarter (Continued)

leveraging all that I am. My freedom and joy comes from knowing that I am unique with a specific purpose that is connected and interrelated with everything else.

Excerpt from: *The Objective Leader: How to Leverage the Power of Seeing Things as They Are*. Written by Elizabeth R Thornton, retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-objective-leader/201604/the-principles-objectivity-can-help-you-think-smarter>

*Elizabeth R Thornton*

Elizabeth R. Thornton is an author, speaker, Founder of the Global Initiative for Objective Leadership. Her book, *The Objective Leader: How to Leverage the Power of Seeing Things as They Are*, is based on a curriculum she developed and teaches to graduate students, entrepreneurs and corporate executives, centered on the premise that we are all subjective—it's human nature. The Objective Leader teaches people that to succeed, we must consciously seek to increase our objectivity—seeing and accepting things as they are without projecting our mental models, fears, background, and personal experiences onto them.



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# From the Manual

## How to Be Objective When You're Emotionally Invested

By Gwen Moran

*We generally think we make decisions based on facts, but bias can creep in when we least expect it. Here's how to check yourself.*

Objectivity is one of those traits we all like to think we have. After all, the best course of action in any given situation is to consider the facts and circumstances, and then arrive at the best possible decision. That's easy, right?

Not so much. The reality is we all have biases. If they're not managed, we then may pay in lost opportunities, money, relationships, and other ways, says Elizabeth R. Thornton, professor of management practice at Babson College in Boston.

"We commit cognitive errors all the time," she says. "We perceive something, and in an instant, we project our mental models, our past experiences, our backgrounds, onto whatever that is—a person, situation, or event. Oftentimes, we get it wrong."

Whenever you think you know all there is to know about a subject, it's time to check your views in the interest of objectivity.

Thornton recalls her own business deal gone bad because she had her personal identity too tied up in a venture. Instead of objectively evaluating the signs that the venture wasn't working out, she focused on her passion for the project and the self-worth she got from heading it up. That lack of objectivity ultimately cost her \$1 million.

When she was able to get some distance and focus on the situation, she began to think about and study the concept of objectivity, which led to her forthcoming book out February 2015, [The Objective Leader: How to Leverage the Power of Seeing Things As They Are](#).

You may not have a cool million on the line, but your lack of objectivity could be costing you in other ways. Bust your biases and get a clearer view by tackling these important steps.

### 1. Realize Objectivity's Limits

If you think you're truly objective, you're wrong. People are naturally biased, says leadership consultant Brandon Smith, whose professional moniker, "The Workplace Therapist," reflects

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# From the Manual

## How to Be Objective When You're Emotionally Invested (Continued)

his expertise in clinical counseling. Once you realize that you're inherently not objective, you can take steps to make yourself better at getting close to it, he says.

### 2. Find Your Weak Spots

Thornton says we leave clues when we're less objective. Are there topics about which you're particularly argumentative or which get under your skin? Are there situations where you routinely overreact? If you're getting agitated or highly emotional, you're probably not thinking rationally or objectively, she says. That may be because you are emotionally invested in the subject or because you hold particular beliefs that aren't letting you clearly see other viewpoints.

"It takes self-awareness, but in the moment, you have to be aware of your triggers and do the opposite," Thornton says.

### 3. Gather A Brain Trust

The best way to become more objective is to expand the input

you're receiving, says management consultant Floranne R. Reagan, president of [EXXELL, Inc.](#) in Boston. Build a network of people you respect whose viewpoints typically vary from your own and seek out their opinions on various matters. They may be colleagues, professionals in other businesses, advisory boards, or directors.

"Ideally, it's someone who cares about you, but also has the ability to say something clearly in a way that you'll actually hear," she says.

### 4. Check Your Personality Type

Your natural way of being can lead to certain biases, Thornton says. If you're naturally a people pleaser, then you may be making decisions based at least partially on your desire to avoid conflict or unpleasantness with others. It's another form of bias, and can prohibit you from weighing the facts strictly on their merits.

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# From the Manual

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## How to Be Objective When You're Emotionally Invested (Continued)

### 5. Invite Other Views

Whenever you think you know all there is to know about a subject, it's time to check your views in the interest of objectivity. A good way to do that is to solicit new viewpoints from others, Smith says. Specifically ask people to share how their views differ. By being explicit about your opinion and inviting others to share theirs in a nonthreatening way, you can compare points and see where you might be missing something.

"Saying something like: 'Here's what I'm seeing. Do you see it differently?' lets people know that you're interested in hearing how their views differ," he says.

### About the author

Gwen Moran writes about business, money and assorted other topics for leading publications and web sites. She was named a Small Business Influencer Awards Top 100 Champion in 2015, 2014, and 2012 and is the co-author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Business Plans* (Alpha, 2010), and several other books.

Article found on the following website: <https://www.fastcompany.com/3039453/how-to-be-objective-when-youre-emotionally-invested>



# CASA of Arizona



CASA Community: Programs | Volunteers | CASAaz

## CASA of Arizona

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